

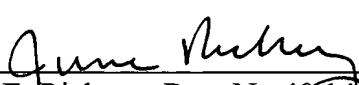
REMARKS

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wada et al (US Patent No. 5,485,406) in view of Hofelt, Jr. et al. (US Patent No, 3,914,907). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons. Amended claim 1 now recites that the radial low point on the tread elements peripheral surface in each of several circumferential planes between the tread shoulders is determined. Then a virtual tread profile from the radial low points is determined. Then a tread removal means removes tread rubber to match the tread profile to the virtual tread profile. Neither the Hofelt reference nor the Wada discloses nor suggests these claimed steps. Instead, Hofelt teaches that a cardboard tracing of the actual radial forces is used to determine the location of the tread where the rubber needs to be reduced. As Wada et al in view of Hofelt, Jr. fails to establish *prima facie* obviousness of the invention as recited in claims 1-3, 5 and 6, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In light of this amendment, all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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